

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are currently pending in this application. Claims 9-24 have previously been withdrawn. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original and other claims in this and other applications. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in light of the following remarks.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Joy et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,697,332) ("Joy"). This rejection is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 1 recites a semiconductor device including a substrate and "at least three kinds of wells formed in and on a top surface of said substrate." Further, "at least one kind of well has a top surface height level higher than the top surface height levels of the other two kinds of wells in relation to the top surface of said substrate." The "other two kinds of wells have substantially the same top surface height level as each other." The other two kinds of wells also "have a different conductivity type than said at least one kind of well."

Joy relates to a method of forming a semiconductor structure with three types of self-aligned wells. The Examiner states that Figure 8g of Joy discloses "at least one kind of well has a top surface height level higher than the top surface height levels of the other two kinds of wells in relation to the top surface of said substrate, wherein said other two kinds of wells have substantially the same top surface height level as each other and wherein said other two kinds of wells have a different conductivity type than said at least one kind of well." (Office Action, page 2). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Figure 8g of Joy depicts an intermediate state of forming a semiconductor structure having a plurality of self-aligned wells. The completed semiconductor structure is shown in Figure 8h, in which the wells are self-aligned and all have the same height. Joy does not disclose a completed semiconductor device wherein "at least one kind of well has a top surface height level higher than the top surface height levels of the other two kinds of wells in relation to the top surface of said substrate" as recited in independent claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over Joy. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable as well. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection as to claims 1-8 be withdrawn.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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